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ABSTRACT

In this paper, two arts education instructors engage in a dialogue about their emerging identities to further knowledge for pre-service educators in teacher education programs. Thus, the paper provides a forum about the conduct and theory of arts-based research in education. It also provides examples and critiques of theories of practice and knowing in arts education. In the first part of the paper, "An Autobiographical Prelude," one of the instructors explores the tensions and complexities inherent in the transformation of one's experience as a performing musician into a music educator. In the second part of the paper, "Metaxic Journeys in Drama Facilitation," the other instructor describes how the educator has facilitated workshops for the past 14 years based on Augusto Boal's "Theater of the Oppressed," a popular theater approach that investigates relationships by embracing and recognizing the tacit and implicit knowledge emerging in the performance process. (Contains 14 references.) (BT)

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Reflections in a Maze of Mirrors: Exploring our Emerging Identities as Arts Educators

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mirror n. (from Latin mirari to wonder at)

Introduction

As arts educators, we explore a maze of mirrors with other artists. This maze involves artistic, educational, and aesthetic experiences that shape our identities both as artists and educators. Through discussion about autobiographical inquiry, we engage in a dialogue about our emerging identities in order to further knowledge for pre-service educators in teacher education programs. As artistic inquiry, we provide a forum about the conduct and theory of arts-based research in education. We also provide examples and critiques of theories of practice and knowing in arts education.

An Autobiographical Prelude – Karen Vicki Lee

The purpose of my presentation is to explore the place of narrative in understanding the gap between the intersection of two identities: musician and music educator. There is a lack of understanding the shifts or extensions in a musicians' identity as they become music educators. Yet there seems to be a need to understand these identity changes as musicians re/construct their identities during the teacher education practicum.

Theoretical Framework

I approach narrative from the perspective that stories do not happen out in the world, but are constructed in people's minds. Jerome Bruner (1986) remarks that "narrative imitates life and life imitates narrative, with 'life' the construction of the human imagination as a 'narrative' is" (13). This research attempts to explore the place of narrative in bridging the gap between the practice of being a musician and being a music educator.

Method

I explore the tensions and complexities inherent in the transformation of my experience as a performing musician into a music educator. I use autobiographical

inquiry to explore the intersection of the identities: musician and music educator, and how these identities have changed the trajectory of my life. I present my writings through journal reflections, personal stories, and poetry. Bruner (1986) suggests, "autobiography to be the most important psychological research project - how our way of telling about ourselves change, and how these accounts take control of our lives" (16). Life is inseparable from life as told. A life is not 'how it was' but how it is told, retold, interpreted and reinterpreted. A story is better understood by considering the possible ways it can be told. If we can learn how people create narratives, we might contribute something new to the ideal. Even if, with respect to life and narrative, we discover, as in Yeats line, that we cannot tell the dancer from the dance, that may be good enough (32).

My growth and understanding as an academic can be traced through all my experiences that brought me to this present day. It is rooted in my past, tangled with parts of my life and experience of being a musician, music student, music teacher, music educator, music teacher educator, music academic, Faculty Advisor, and Graduate student. As a musician, I have been trained to participate in performances and competitions. As a music educator, I have been trained to encourage young musicians to participate in music through activities prescribed by curriculum guides. Prescesky (1996) suggests that there is a disparity in the philosophical foundations of music and music education which makes it difficult for musicians to establish professional identities as music educators (60). My 'self-as-performer' and 'self-as-educator' identities are perpetuated and reinforced by images constructed in society and educational contexts. Thus, I have experienced conflicts between being musically active as a performer and as a music educator in schools.

Portfolio

I have compiled my writing in the form of a portfolio. My portfolio reflects the beginnings of my journey in a maze of mirrors, with writings in/as re-search through performance and reflection. It is hoped that my writings will invite readers through passages and spaces that optically reflect and refract the convex and concave entrance ways to identities. As my narrative is created, a story of personal and professional growth overlaps, constructing a new layered, emerging identity as an arts educator. I gained voice through dialogues that occurred between myself, musicians, student teachers, and school advisors. Autobiographical writing as an active re-search process has become a tool to help me understand all my questions and wonders about musicians, music teachers, musicians as teachers, and musicians becoming music educators.

Writing poetry is a form of representing my thoughts and feelings. Wooldridge (1996) proposes that, "they hide in feelings and images, in weeds and delivery vans, daring us to notice and give them form with our words. They take us to an invisible world where light and dark, inside and outside meet" (xii). Writing poems frees me from powerful constraints of the expert-novice myth and allows me to tell my story with others. Through poetry, I can listen and respond to others, making spaces for both voices to find places beside one another. It is hoped that these different forms of representation might identify and change processes that construct identities so that

representation might identify and change processes that construct identities so that identities may intersect or overlap.

My autobiographical writings attempt to emphasize the importance of self-study approaches in research. By sharing some of my past experiences with music, I see the possibility for becoming closer to all musicians, for becoming sensitive to their needs and to my own. As I write my stories, I become aware of where I come from, where I am, and where I would like to be in the future. As I share my stories, I see the potential for informing future pre-service music educators of the journey to becoming a music educator.

Significance of Research

I have an interest in relating how my professional life as a musician has affected my identity as a music educator. The value in this research involves:

- recreating the past to explore issues of identity,
- reconceptualizing the 'music educator' identity, and
- understanding how integral a musicians' identity becomes in teacher education programs.

I hope that, by understanding my present layered identity, my research might provide insight into the ways pre-service music educators re/construct identities. Through my own story, music educators might come to understand how I overcame tensions and conflicts when becoming a music educator.

Metaxic[1] Journeys in Drama Facilitation - Warren Linds

Introduction

I have facilitated workshops based on Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 1979) for the past 14 years. Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) is a popular theatre approach which investigates relationships by embracing and recognizing the tacit and implicit knowledge emerging in the performance process. This knowing is expressed in the possibilities opened up through interplaying our lives and the stories of our lives. Thus drama is an enactive process where "every reflection brings forth a world" (Maturana and Varela, 1991, 26).

The drama process is shaped by me as I am by it as I skillfully cope (Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1999) with the living/lived experiences of the participants. I am co-implicated and co-evolving alongside them in this circular encounter of spontaneous creativity, which is "extemporaneous, unstructured, unplanned, unrehearsed.....in the moment", the "here", "the now", and "in becoming" (Moreno, 1960, 15-16).

Purpose

My study explores the often hidden, but fluid, identities in becoming such a facilitator. Narratives of practice read through different forms and voices help draw

attention to my practice. We begin to see my emerging identity in flux and flow: there is no static "I" that exchanges experiences with an audience or one "experience" we focus on. I play with types of texts and languages, bringing together BodyMindSpirit through word, body, gesture, feeling and theory to bring us face to face with my kinesthetic and discursive experience.

I have undertaken this process of my own developing / evolving / transforming / imag(e)ining through a workshop approach with a teachers' community of/in practice, investigation, reflection and exploration. This creates a dramatic interplay between facilitation, learning and engagement in popular theatre / education where I believe learning, including my own, will occur.

Theoretical Framework

> The world that is enacted is inseparable from how we act in it (Varela, et al, 140).

Facilitation is a dialogical and social process as people spontaneously play and inter-play with each other, finding and filling spaces for dialogue and interaction. We don't know where the spaces will open up. We jump into these uncertainties wherever they appear as individual stories are interwoven with others in a multilayered, nested text. Similarly, I, as the drama facilitator work in/am part of a series of constantly shifting spaces that emerge from the interplay between my suggestions and what participants do. This requires reflex/reflect ivity, paying attention to what I am thinking, feeling and doing in the moment of (inter) action to maintain a connection with the field I am part of.

This means I as facilitator am an ever-evolving "self" which is metaxic...which, Boal (1994) explains,

> is the state of belonging completely and simultaneously to two different, autonomous worlds: the image of reality and the reality of the image. The participant shares and belongs to these two autonomous worlds: their reality and the image of their reality, which she has created (43).

A new kind knowing emerges from this process of inter-action between the observing-I, the I-in the situation, the not-I, the other. We begin to see everything in new ways. We hold mirrors up to nature but, instead of trying to represent it, find it accessible. Through metaxis,"self"-observation allows us to see knowledge as it is enacted in the present, and the idea of self/other/world becomes flexible.

The idea of the crystal (Richardson, 1994) also helps explain this as we recognize there are more than three sides from which to approach the world, with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, and angles of approach. Crystals provide a structure of fluid form, constantly changing as the light changes. It allows me to explore the simultaneity of contradictory experiences (like light moving in waves and particles, rather than simply one or the other) in particular situations at particular times.

Research Methods and C/S ites

I am focusing on my own practice of been-being-becoming-imag(e)ining a facilitator. I share narratives of my past/present work in a series of educational sites as I work with other teachers in developing our skills. These sites of research involves reflecting from my own multiple standpoints as, for example, observer, participant, co-facilitator, director and coach as I and the environment I work in are "mutually enfolded in multiple ways" (Varela, et al, 1991, 202). In the process of inquiry my own learnings spiral past us again and again as moments gradually reveal greater and greater implications and connections back and forth from/to each other.

While reflecting with others in this maze of mirrors, I experience my own emerging identity as facilitator as reenactments of some aspect of my practice; at another, as a dialogue about it, and at still another, as a model of its transformation. At the same time I hope I model "a way of seeing error and failure as opportunities for learning"(Schon, 1987, 297).

Implications

Reflection as "experience" has many implications for helping others learn to become an arts educator/facilitator. Dreyfus and Dreyfus maintain (1986) that the teachers of a skill are frequently articulate dispensers of helpful facts, procedures and principles. As such, they may hasten the student's progress from novice to advanced beginner to competent performer. But if, " all they know are facts and rules of inference, such teachers cannot possibly be successful doers or guides on the way to expertise" (201).

I question how do I move beyond "facts" and "rules of inference" to intuitive action based on common sense, wisdom and mature judgement? I move within the space/time of my working as someone implicated in a spell of involvement in the here and now. In this way, skills aren't something I just turn to, but I experience the enactment of drama as drawing movements out of me (Dreyfus, 1999, 15).

Conclusion

Danish physicist Niels Bohr has written, "whatever I say should not be taken as an assertion but as a question". In the same vein, my inquiry process has been an effort to raise more questions for me (than I started with) for other practitioners to consider in reflecting on their own drama facilitation/teaching practices and how these skills in facilitating collaborative and improvised theatre may be useful in other areas of teaching.

Endnotes

1. Metaxis, from metaxu: adverb, metaphor, verb, grammar, preposition, plural, etc. In the state of in the midst, betwixt, between, between-whiles, in the interval, neither good nor bad (Liddell, 1996, 1115)

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